

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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USMISSION NATO  
USEC BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 2898

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, SP  
SUBJECT: CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC "TEAM" LEADERS ON CURRENT SITUATION

SUMMARY: LEADERS OF THE CD "TEAM" WERE NOT OVERLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE CRISIS ENGENDERED BY PCE LEGALIZATION. THEY CONTINUE TO BE UNCERTAIN ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR ELECTORAL COLLABORATION IN THE CENTER, OR THE FORMULA FOR ACHIEVING IT. RUIZ GIMENEZ IS CONCERNED ABOUT THE NEED FOR REACHING AGREEMENT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, WHILE GIL ROBLES AND OTHERS ARE LESS WILLING TO CAST THEIR LOT WITH AN AMORPHOUS CENTER, PREFERRING INSTEAD TO ACHIEVE CD UNITY AND THEN WORK FOR ELECTORAL COOPERATION WITH OTHER CLEARLY LABELED CENTER TENDENCIES, PARTICULARLY LIBERALS AND SOCIAL DEMOCRATS. END SUMMARY.

1. THE LEADERS OF 5 OF THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC "TEAM'S" 6  
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MEMBER PARTIES--RUIZ GIMENEZ (ID), GIL ROBLES, JR. (FPD), CANELLAS (UDC-CATALAN), RUIZ MONRABAL (UDPV-VALENCIA), AND GARCIA AGUDIN (PPG-GALICIA)--LUNCED WITH ME APR 14. THEY MADE THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS CONCERNING THE CURRENT POLITICAL SITUATION:

2. PCE LEGALIZATION AND THE PITA RESIGNATION. NONE OF THE CD

LEADERS HAD INSIDE KNOWLEDGE OF THE POST-LEGALIZATION CRISIS, BUT BELIEVE IT TO HAVE LARGELY PASSED. GIL ROBLES OBSERVED, HOWEVER, THAT SUAREZ'S POSITION HAD BEEN WEAKENED AND ALIANZA POPULAR'S STRENGTHENED AS A RESULT, ALTHOUGH HE EXPECTED THE PENDULUM TO SWING BACK AS REACTION TRAILED OFF. THEY WERE ESPECIALLY CONCERNED OVER THE ALIANZA'S--AND PARTICULARLY FRAGA'S--SHRILL ATTACKS ON THE GOVT OVER THE LEGALIZATION ISSUE.

3. CENTER UNITY. RUIZ GIMENEZ, WHO CHARACTERIZED PRESS REPORTS OF IMMINENT UNIFICATION OF THE CD "TEAM" AND CENTRO DEMOCRATICO AS PURE INVENTION, EXPRESSED PRIVATELY TO ME HIS CONCERN OVER THE DISTANCE YET TO BE TRAVELED IN THAT DIRECTION AND IN SO LITTLE TIME. GIL ROBLES LATER TOOK A SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT TACK, INDICATING THAT THERE STILL WAS SUFFICIENT TIME TO FORGE EFFECTIVE CENTER ELECTORAL COLLABORATION, PREFERRING TO WAIT FOR THE SITUATION TO DEVELOP BEFORE CONSIDERING ALTERNATIVES TO THE CD TEAM'S FORMULA OF PROVINCE-BY-PROVINCE ELECTORAL COOPERATION. SECONDED BY CANELLAS AND RUIZ MONRABAL, HE PREDICTABLY EMPHASIZED THE NECESSITY OF PRESENTING A COHERENT, IDENTIFIABLE CD OPTION IN THE CONTEST, AND AGAIN REJECTED ANY INTEGRATION OF THE CD "TEAM" INTO THE "AMORPHOUS" CENTRO.

4. SHADES OF DIFFERENCE. IT WAS CLEAR DURING THIS EXCHANGE THAT RUIZ GIMENEZ CONTINUES TO BE MORE AMENDABLE TO A COMPROMISE SOLUTION, ALBEIT UNDERFINED, TO THE PROBLEM OF CENTER UNITY, WHILE GIL ROBLES STILL PLACES A PRIORITY ON THE CONSOLIDATION OF CD UNITY, TO INCLUDE THE INTEGRATION OF ALVAREZ DE MIRANDA'S PDC IN THE "TEAM," WITH STEPS TO DEAL WITH THE ISSUE OF

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ELECTORAL COOPERATION WITH OTHER CENTER FAMILIES, SPECIFICALLY LIBERALS AND SOCIAL DEMOCRATS, TO FOLLOW. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION, NEITHER RUIZ GIMENEZ NOR GIL ROBLES COULD SPECIFY WHERE CANANILLAS'S PARTIDO POPULAR, A MIXED BAG OF CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC "TACITOS" AND LIBERALS, WOULD FIT IN SUCH AN EVOLUTION.

5. THE ROLE OF SUAREZ. RUIZ GIMENEZ BELIEVED THAT SUAREZ HAD DECIDED SOME TIME AGO TO RUN IN THE ELECTIONS, BUT THAT THE DRUM BEAT OF POLITICAL AND MEDIA PRESSURE AGAINST HIS TAKING AN OVERLY PARTISAN AND DIRECT ROLE IN THE CONTEST WAS CAUSING HIM TO RETHINK HIS POSITION. AT THE MOMENT, RUIZ GIMENEZ THOUGHT, SUAREZ WAS UNDECIDED. GIL ROBLES REITERATED THE STATEMENT HE MADE AFTER A RECENT MEETING WITH SUAREZ, THAT HE DID NOT BELIEVE THE PRIME MINISTER WOULD HEAD A LABELED SLATE. THE CD "TEAM" LEADERS WERE NOT OPPOSED IN PRINCIPLE TO SUAREZ RUNNING, BUT INSISTED THAT HE DO IT IN SUCH A WAY THAT WOULD NOT UNDERMINE THE LEGITIMACY OF THE CONTEST. WHETHER SUAREZ RAN OR NOT, GIL ROBLES PREDICTED, THE GOVT WOULD IN

SOME FASHION COME TO THE AID OF THE POLITICAL CENTER IN ITS BATTLE WITH ALIANZA POPULAR.

6. WHITHER THE SOCIALISTS. GIL ROBLES OBSERVED THAT THE PSOE, THROUGH ITS UNIFICATION AGREEMENTS WITH RAVENTOS'S PSC-C AND PARON'S CSM, HAD IN EFFECT DISMANTLED THE FEDERACION DE PARTIDOS SOCILAISTAS (FPS), OF WHICH THOSE TWO PARTIES WERE MEMBERS. ALL THAT REMAINED OF THE FPS WERE ROJAS MARCOS'S ANDALUSIAN PSA, WHICH HE CHARACTERIZED AS IN STEADY DECLINE, AND SOME SUPPORT IN THE REGION OF ARAGON. HE SAW DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE PSOE AND TIerno'S PSP AS DEEPLY ROOTED, HIGHLY PERSONAL, AND UNBRIDGEABLE BEFORE ELECTIONS, AND BELIEVED THE PSP WOULD SUFFER AS THE RESULT. GIL ROBLES DISMISSED THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC COALITION INVOLVING MURILLO'S PSOE-H, GARCIA LOPEZ'S PSDE, AND LASUEN'S FSD AS OF LITTLE ELECTORAL IMPORTANCE AND CHARACTERIZED LASUEN AS A RESPECTED ECONOMIST WITH NO REAL POLITICAL FOLLOWING.

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7. "LOCKING IN" THE PSOE. GIL ROBLES, ECHOED BY OTHERS, EMPHASIZED KEEPING LINES OPEN TO THE PSOE IN ORDER TO AVOID PUSHING IT TOWARD THE COMMUNISTS AND ALSO AS AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN THE ELABORATION, AFTER ELECTIONS, OF SOME SORT OF "SOCIAL PACT" WITH WHICH TO DEAL WITH SPAIN'S WORSENING ECONOMIC SITUATION. TO THIS END THE "TEAM" IS PROMOTING THE PSOE/CD-SPONSORED PROJECT FOR ESTABLISHING A "COMSROMISO CONSTITUCIONAL" WHICH WOULD SET OUT THE GENERAL LINES OF THE NEW CONSTITUTION AND BIND THE SIGNATORIES TO THEM AND IS STUDYING THE POSSIBLE FORMULATION OF CENTER-SOCIALIST CONSENSUS SLATES IN THE SENATE CONTEST.

8. COMMENT: THE CD "TEAM" IS TAKING AN INCREASINGLY PRAGMATIC APPROACH TO ELECTORAL POLITICS, AND WITH THE RECENT FEDERATION OF RUIZ GIMENEZ'S ID AND GIL ROBLES'S FPD THEY ARE MAKING PROGRESS TOWARD THE ELABORATION OF A MORE COHERENT--AND PROBABLY MORE ELECTORALLY SUCCESSFUL--CD FORMATION. BUT THE "TEAM'S" ELECTORAL STRENGTH IN MANY SPANISH REGIONS REMAINS SUSPECT AND THERE IS CONSIDERABLE DISTANCE YET TO BE TRAVELED IN ARRIVING AT SOME ACCOMMODATION WITH OTHER CENTRIST GROUPS WHICH WILL MINIMIZE THEIR COMPETITION FOR THE SAME CONSTITUENCY AND THEN STRENGTHEN THE CENTER'S POSITION VIS-A-VIS ALIANZA POPULAR.STABLER

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